FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

"For a world united in prayer"

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880-1956)

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***Our purpose:** To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.*

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EDITORIAL

OLD DIFFERENCES, NEW LIKENESSES

You can communicate with others if you let them know you well enough to be able to identify with you. This is a great discovery for me to make. Communicating has always been one of my problems (hence, no doubt, one of my "specialties"). When—for a variety of reasons—I felt able to communicate with literally no one in the world, I not only saw myself as outcast by society but believed that there must be a good reason for this, namely that I was unacceptable for a variety of reasons that society evidently knew though I didn't.

Feeling ostracized, I clammed up. If I was spoken to, I responded with politeness, nothing more. Politeness is impersonal. Anyone, taught correctly, can achieve it. And what you achieve is the same whether you are an ambassador or a truck-driver or a hostess. Politeness takes the place of communication. It substitutes a manner where true feelings are dangerous or difficult or impossible or irrelevant. The word most commonly associated with it is "frigid." It contains no warmth. Except where it is simply necessary, politeness turns people off. Being merely utilitarian, it has none of the colors or shades of colors of personality. It attracts no one but old women hipped on courtesy. It is the natural refuge of the arrogant—those who regard themselves as being so unique that they cannot imagine anyone identifying with them, to start with. These are the people who are always vaingloriously complaining of their isolation. They suffer from spiritual and other kinds of pride and make themselves as miserable as they do their friends, without, however, knowing why.

When, though, you arrive at your comeuppance in this world, when even you know that you must stop pretending to yourself that you are in charge of your own universe at the very least, and you have to teach yourself no matter how belatedly to bow your head and heart and soul and even your knees before a power that is greater than yourself, and you have to permit this power to govern your existence in both the greatest and smallest ways (I don't know which is the more painful), you finally put yourself into perspectives that are really real.

You see who and what you are. And you accept yourself. Once you have done this, you can become yourself without discomfort, you relinquish all the little prides you had been clinging to, you drop the politeness. All the variety of your actual self—nothing ideal, certainly—begins to sprout and bud and flower and leaf. Others, seeing this display, are able to identify with some part of it, if not with what's beautiful or fragrant then with what is blemished or stunted, even with what is rotten. They understand some part of you. And so they accept and welcome you. Communication has been achieved. . . . Odd, that I seem to have learned somewhere that it was my differences that would constitute my self. I see now that it is actually my likenesses to others.

I mention this fact because to me it has come as an unexpected though precious bonus for my labors in getting ready to have a relationship with God. And even more unexpected and valuable to me have been the acceptance and welcome given me by others. Instead of the competitive enmity through which I habitually saw them I have received interest, encouragement, moral support, intellectual advice, the tales of many spiritual experiences. It's a development I never hoped for. —P. G.

The four requirements of prayer are Expectancy, Assurance, Confidence, and Patient Waiting. As in the following verse: "Expect the Lord; do manfully, and let thy heart take courage; and wait thou for the Lord."

MARION MILL PREMINGER (1913-1972)

"Albert Schweitzer said there are two classes of people —the helpers and the nonhelpers—I am a helper." Marion Preminger said this about herself many times. And it was true. She helped many people in many ways. Born in Hungary, she became an actress and a member of the international set. In 1950 she gave up this life in order to help Dr. Schweitzer, whom she regarded as a saint. She spent several months each year with him in his hospital at Lambaréné in the Congo; she nursed patients, particularly the lepers. During the rest of the year she went on lecture-tours to raise money for the Schweitzer Hospital Fund. In this way she became widely known as a speaker and later as an author. After Dr. Schweitzer's death, she wrote an article entitled "I Will Never See His Grave," which Fellowship in Prayer proudly published in 1966. Ever since, Marion Preminger was one of our most creative members, not only contributing to the publication but serving as Advisor-At-Large and entertaining the staff in her Park Avenue apartment where she kept a notable collection of African art as well as Dr. Schweitzer's shoes. In 1970 she addressed Fellowship in Prayer's twentieth anniversary celebration (where the photograph above was taken). It was typical of her that, at her death last April, her membership in FIP was paid up through 1979. She was in great sympathy with the Fellowship, and all of us will miss her help in many many ways.

THROW AWAY PRAYER CRUTCHES

Ramond M. Veh

In directing a youth conference recently, we indicated to the chairman—a capable high-schooler—that he might dismiss the period with prayer.

The boy looked embarrassed. "Who shall I call on?" he queried.

"No one. Do it yourself," we suggested.

"Well—ah—would you mind if I got someone else? I—I'm not prepared."

And a local minister "did it." This young man didn't even have a pair of "prayer crutches" on which to lean.

Have you ever been caught in a similar situation? Have you been desperately afraid that someone might call on you for prayer? Have you stumbled through a public prayer? Have you memorized a prayer that you might have a pair of crutches in case of emergency?

Young people do not want continually to be on prayer crutches. They inwardly wish to have real freedom in prayer.

We can have effectiveness and readiness in prayer if we will learn the art of prayer.

Jesus, you remember, was asked by his disciples "teach us to pray." Each of us might make this request. We can, in any event, consider some procedures that grow out of the experiences of many who have learned how to throw away their prayer crutches.

1. Develop the prayer habit

"Pray constantly," Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. In plain words, carry the prayer attitude with you everywhere. "Pray constantly"—not for formality's sake and much less "to be heard for much speaking." Prayer is a good habit, and good habits regulate life, make for stability, and give contentment. Achieving the prayer habit arms one for life's crises which may come at any moment.

Is not fulfilling the Scriptures' demand to "pray constantly"

simply "the practice of the presence of God?" This habit was set forth centuries ago by Brother Lawrence, a humble monk in a Carmelite monastery. He was cook for the brothers and had many duties. The set times of devotion meant less to him than the habit, which he set himself to form, of conversing with God continually and referring all he did to him. To form this habit took persistence, but in the end it became the constant practice of his life. With each task he turned to God for help. Failure brought not simply prayer for forgiveness, but the renewed resolve of confident dependence upon God: "It is you who must hinder my failings," he said, "and mend what is amiss." The first requirement, he declared, was a "high notion and esteem of God in faith," then the realization of God's constant presence, and with this the decision to do all for God and from the love of God

The prayer habit is one that can be cultivated.

2. Avoid the prayer "rut"

A rut and a habit are not the same thing. It is easy to repeat words and phrases which become meaningless. Too often prayer is a desultory exercise. Because we do not approach it with a sense of expectancy, nothing exciting ever happens and we get no sense of prayer's power. The mere spectator at a ball game can never know the thrill that comes from actually playing it. To really know the power of prayer we must participate in its creative processes.

Prayer in sincerity and truth keeps the stream of devotion fresh and sparkling. Learn to pray short sentences. Begin with thanksgiving to God for the blessings you enjoy. With the assurance of forgiveness, then procede to confession of wrongdoing, of sin, of violence done to God's way. Then you have the right to ask for help, for wisdom, for daily needs, and for "greater gifts" of spiritual insight.

God delights in answering such prayers.

3. Seek direct contact with God

Prayer brings us in direct touch with God, with whom all things

are possible. It is a personal, gracious means for approaching God and having communication with him. Spiritual companionship with God is the very base of Christian living, for what is Christianity except spiritual comradeship? Let God know that you know he is there.

Prayer should be used always with humility and reverence. When prayer is so used it brings us in touch with God's limitless resources. When we are completely possessed by God, we have but one desire—to love him and enjoy him forever.

Clarice Bowman suggests, "Prayer awakens with trumpet blast and prods lazy sympathies with motive power for action." Indeed, prayer unleashes vast sources of spiritual energy. We become zealous in Kingdom-building under God's dictates. We soon sense that we must engage in definite expressions of social concern. We can expect to be thrust out "where cross the crowded ways of life" to witness for the Gospel of Christ.

Prayer centers in God and seeks above all else his will and way. Prayer, at its deepest, truest, highest levels, puts us in line for experiencing greater joy. We come then to know in reality Paul's premise for dedicated living: "Rejoice always. Pray constantly."

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Helen Gee Woods

Dear Lord, I know at times
the burdens others bear —
the ones I bear, the inconsistencies
and changing moods in human nature.
For this, we do not always know
why people do as they do, help me,
O Lord, to be compassionate,
to remove the beam
within mine own eye, to realize
with greater understanding
that I should never criticize.

THE FLOWERING OF MATURITY

Josephine H. Voracek

I never saw the joy or gladness that abounded all around as I hurried and rushed to make every moment count. It seemed there was always so very much to do, so much to be accomplished before each day was through. Each day the hours sped away and, tired and spent at night, I'd say: "God forgive me—I'm just too tired to pray!"

I'd toss and roll the whole night long and wake exhausted the following morn, and once again begin a busy day without taking time to pray. More and more problems kept on following me, and heavier became each task. "O why, why doesn't God help me!" I thought; and I heard Him reply: "My child, you didn't ask."

The sky was filled with sunshine and birds sang in the trees. The beauty of the flowers and busy hum of bees I did not see and did not hear as I toiled on, for my day was dark and gray and bleak. "Why must my life be filled with stress and cares, and why can I not see and these things share? Why, O lord, why?" And God answered: "My child, you did not seek."

That night I tried to pray but varied thoughts stampeded my mind and prayer was lost. I felt my jumbled words just weren't reaching God—or God did not care. "God! Where are you, God! I've come to you but you hear me not. What good, I ask, is it to pray if you close the door and turn away." Then in the softest whispers I heard God gently and lovingly chide: "My child, I heard every word that you said—you just forgot to knock."

I awoke the following morning and with new zest greeted the day. Knowing all I had to accomplish, I paused and took time to pray. I thanked God for His comfort. Asked strength for the day to do what I must. Asked for faith in Him and in myself, that my efforts would not be in vain. I pleaded for hope in the best and the worst—no matter how things went. And I begged for His love, help, and guidance, through the Power and Magic of Prayer.

TWO STORIES *by Eleanor Ebersole*

THE COOK

In a school for scholars, one of ivy and old stone, many came and went. Young ones with young loves. Older ones, tormented by their long search. Others, quietly questioning, moving step by step, inch by inch, toward their truth. Through all the the long years the buildings stood.

Down several flights of well worn steps, and then outdoors, back of the buildings under tall pines, one who had lived the life upstairs sat quietly in the cool. The cook. Sometimes the searchers came down to spend a few hours in merriment, or in their troubles, but usually the cook worked by himself.

In fact, the cook was a legend. Each new scholar eventually heard at table about the great doctor of philosophy who prepared their meals. For each celebration, a new party; for each nation, their favorite foods. And so it went.

The cook wanted for nothing. He had a bed, food, and a cool quiet place of his own, and when he so desired, a place upstairs at the head of the table.

THE MOST SELFISH

The woman thought, "Surely I am the most selfish."

She owned the most beautiful spot of earth in the whole land. It was tended and cared for. It grew beautiful flowers and bright harvest berries. There was always a song when the woman walked about her land. Yet there was the shadow of selfishness, too.

Because of her sad, selfish feelings, the woman finally took the deed to her land and divided it between her neighbors

whose land was not nearly as beautiful as hers.

With that, the woman left the country. She wandered about looking for new land, which she found. It was usually dump land, but with her care it grew beautiful, in time, like the land she had left.

On and on for a large part of a lifetime the woman went, beautifying the ugly, then leaving it, because of her guilt, to others whose land was not as beautiful as hers.

Finally after many years the woman decided to give herself the pleasure of visiting all the spots she had chosen to beautify. She started with the last to be left behind.

Much to the woman's surprise, the shrubs had not been pruned and the grass had many weedy patches. She went on.

The next land was worse. Its delicate wooden fence had begun to crumble and the roses had turned into a bramble.

As she went on back, each piece of land had deteriorated more than the previous ones. She could hardly recognize their potential beauty at all.

The woman almost could not bring herself to visit the last, the one she had started first and enjoyed into her selfishness. Without a surveyor she would never have found it. There were broken boughs, trash, and discarded boards from the broken house. She had been gone a very long time.

The woman sat on a loose board and wondered about the beauty she missed so much. She reached for a bit of glass, then an old bottle, then some straggling vines. Without a plan she began to recreate the land into its former beauty. When it was again a spot of color and green grass, she breathed a new breath of joy.

This time she didn't need to worry about her selfishness. She knew. The land of beauty was a vision held within herself. To be maintained, it depended on her love.

THE WEAKNESS OF WORDS

Catherine Cabeen Houck

Two of the overworked phrases of our daily speech are "generation gap" and "lack of communication."

"Lack of communication" seems to be the root of all dissatisfaction with our relationship to any around us, and the "gap" may have nothing to do with the generations. We simply are failing to respond to our natural and true emotions. Not only are we unable, or at least hesitant, to speak about God, prayer, faith, divine healing, and such spiritual matters, but we are equally unable to speak our thoughts on much less elevated matters.

We hesitate to phone or visit with a friend in time of illness or trouble for fear we will not say the "right" word or perhaps appear prying or even offensive. The "right" word comes naturally when the emotion is right. Last summer one of my granddaughters, not yet three years old, came running to me in our garden with a minuscule flower, so small that only a child of her height could have seen it and so fragile that only fingers soft enough to untangle a cobweb could have picked it. Yet her face beamed as she presented it to me, saying, "Grandmommy, here's a special petunia for you." The words were not right, but this gracious and true act caused a response that was immediate and joyful.

Why be afraid of offending? Can a Christian ever offend? Isn't the impulse that prompts the fact the voice of Christ speaking in us? What has caused us to become so hesitant to console, to share, to make known our concern for others? Are we afraid of being spurned? of being called old-fashioned? or of being laughed at for belonging to another generation? Try to recall when you were actually repelled when you spoke sympathetic-

ally or offered help or made a little effort to show your concern. Now try to remember the last time you received a pleasant answer and a warm smile for your trouble. The latter, I believe, will bring more memories.

For many months I have been the one in our Prayer Circle who is responsible for all the letters that go to the ill in homes or hospitals and to all bereaved or troubled members of our congregation. Sometimes I feel it is a staggering job. I find myself wondering what to write. To those whose stay in the hospital is of short duration, or where the illness is not serious, I can write happily and without much anxiety. But to those for whom we know there will be no return home—who, we know, know this too—the words of assurance must take on a different quality. These words must not be too consoling nor too abstract but must carry a truly strengthening message. In these letters I find that the promises of Christ are the only true comfort I can give. Thus it is that without words of my own I am able to communicate with those who need a contact.

Perhaps we don't need words as much as we think. It may sound strange, but it isn't necessarily surprising to consider that God reveals himself, without speaking a word, through flowers, clouds, and stars. Your smile, your gesture, your very presence may do as much. In order to speak on any subject that calls for great control of emotion is difficult. To visit a dear one who we know is in the terminal stage of disease is often more than we can force our physical selves to do. It would be impossible if it were not for that inner strength that we scarcely know we have. Words that are spoken are so less adequate than we wish that we never remember what actually was said. But that doesn't mean there was no rapport. Some spirit higher than ourselves was present and thoughts were exchanged and memories were brought out that have left a lasting happiness. Yet there was no attempt to utter the "right" word.

The only way to have the ability to speak and act freely is to commune daily with God through the level of prayer. By doing this we store up a reserve power and assurance that fills us with insight as to where happiness lies and strengthens us to find it. To be at ease when speaking on spiritual matters may lead us to be at ease within the framework of all common contacts with family, friends, and business associates. If we can say to some of our friends that we are truly ourselves when we are with them, perhaps we can find that through prayer we may shed our mask and find that in God "we live and move and have our being." If we can do this, it is possible that we can find that all speech becomes a common language understood by one and all regardless of our inadequacies.

BRIGHT FLAME AND HOLY WATER

Emma S. McLaughlin

I never saw a single burning bush
Although I often walked where brambles curled
And, with impatience, lifted hands to push
Aside the darkness, tightly purled.
No holy water poured in quick release
From smitten stone, to quench my rasping thirst,
Nor did I stumble on oasis peace
In burning sands, when I was desert-cursed.

Instead, I dug a workman's share of wells
And watched the seeping water slowly rise —
And from the black despair of private hells
I kindled fire to flame against the skies.
The flint and steel of faith were in my heart,
And there I saw the living water start.

FOR THIS ONE HOUR

William Arthur Ward

For this one hour I can be grateful. I can thank God for life itself, for opportunities, for friends, and for a hundred other blessings and privileges to be counted, cherished and enjoyed.

For this one hour I can be cheerful. Equipped with a smile, a song and a sunny disposition, I can transform the atmosphere, enrich my environment, and brighten the day for others.

For this one hour I can be optimistic. Striking a happy medium between the pessimist and the pollyanna, I can realistically and confidently expect good things to happen to me and through me.

For this one hour I can spend some time in prayer. I can pause to recharge my spiritual batteries, renew my mental perspectives, refresh my physical energies, and replenish my faith in God and my fellow man.

For this one hour I can be unselfish. I can take the Golden Rule off the shelf, dust it, unwrap it, and put it to work in my thoughts, words, and actions right now.

For this one hour I can look for the best in others. It may take some diligent searching, patient seeking, and careful screening, but I will work at it, even as I want others to look for the best in me.

For this one hour I can help make someone happy. I can do it through a word of encouragement or comfort, or perhaps by a helping hand, an understanding touch, an empathetic look, a telephone call, a letter, a visit.

For this one hour I can be forgiving. I can leave the lowlands of resentment, grudges, and bitterness, and rise to the highlands of understanding, love and forgiveness.

YOU THINK WITH YOUR HEART

Mildred Long

We are all familiar with the words in Proverbs, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." We agree, give intellectual assent, but fail to apply this wisdom to ourselves.

The mind is a rather complicated part of us and not entirely understood even by deep scholars. We are aware of our conscious minds, the home of reason, will, intellect, all the processes of conscious thought.

Often we are not aware of the subconscious mind, the home of memory, imagination, emotion, and intuition. This part of the mind functions in sleep, causing us to dream, and retains the memory of all that has happened to us with its emotional content. In addition it controls all the involuntary functions of the body: breathing, circulation, digestion, glandular activity, etc. If not interfered with, that functioning is perfect.

Imagination is the picture-forming basis of all we plan or desire or accomplish, and too often we use it for destruction instead of building.

Intuition is partial manifestation of the presence of divine guidance within us. God is there to help us, but too often our emotions or memories obstruct His guidance. He will take only what room we give Him, and assume only that control which we willingly concede to Him.

Psychologists tell us that we do ninety per cent of our thinking with the emotions. Therefore when we say, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," we are saying, "Man's emotional response to life is the determining factor in his personality." That means the problem of overcoming illness, especially chronic illness, lies mostly with the emotions.

Psychosomatics teaches us that from 75 to 95 per cent of all sicknesses and accidents have an emotional cause or a strong emotional contributing factor. Normally we recover from an illness. There are few diseases that always become chronic or for which there is no cure. Therefore, in any illness let us ask ourselves:

"What wrong emotions contributed to this?" In chronic illness let us ask, "What deeply buried emotional trauma (injury) prevents me from getting well?"

In my own case, I found fear and guilt to be the basic disturbing elements in my emotional life. In fact, most psychologists class all disturbing emotions under two or three heads. That classification is sufficient for our purpose: fear, guilt, anger.

Let us mention the offspring of fear, anger, guilt. Fear is the parent of anxiety, worry, inferiority feelings, jealousy, insecurity, comparison of oneself with others, criticism, secretiveness, sensitivity, and many inhibitions.

Anger is the parent of temper, quarrelsomeness, frustration, revenge or retaliation, irritation, annoyance, hostility, jealousy, resistance, resentment, and unforgiveness.

Guilt is basic in all personality derangements from neurosis to insanity and criminality. Some psychologists say guilt is at the bottom of fear. Sin makes the sinner retreat from God and tend to reject His offered love and pardon. So also a feeling of guilt, even when unjustified, keeps one from experiencing God's love and makes him feel unacceptable to those of his family and friends who want to love him.

Evidences of a guilty feeling are found in secretiveness or over-talkativeness, arrogance and domineering, criticism and condemnation of others, self-justification, supersensitivity, and many unsocial traits.

What we want to do here is to apply the laws of the mind to our problem and recognize the power of thought which is able to transform even the hidden emotions. Paul told us: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds," and "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report. . . think on these things." He also admonishes us, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ," "See that ye have the mind of Christ."

Here lies the solution to our problem: the changing of the carnal, self-centered mind to the mind of Christ where the Holy Spirit is in control. It is nothing more nor less than accepting the salvation Jesus made available for us by His death upon

the cross and His resurrection. We accept Him as Savior with the intellect; with the will we strive to be obedient and often succeed to a great degree. But the majority of us do not bring the deep areas of the subconscious mind into His light to be transformed by His love.

I was one of these. I went through a cleansing and renewing process which transformed my inner consciousness and my emotional response to life. I am a new creature. Also I was released from illness and incapacity for which medical science had no remedy. Now I can say, "I have been redeemed. I have experienced the transforming power of God down to the depths of my being. There may be more work to be done yet, but I have learned how to apply His love to free me from fear and guilt and their attendant evils." You can have the same release. The laws operate for everyone.

THINK POSITIVE THOUGHTS

The first law is to think positive thoughts. Obey Paul's command. This cannot be overemphasized; for if we fail here, we shall inevitably fail in the harder task of changing some wrong emotion within us. This is an inescapable discipline.

Thought has a power for good or evil that few of us are willing to recognize. Add to every good, cheerful, forward-looking, courageous, loving thought the feeling that God is thinking through you and using you as a channel to send His goodness into the world, and the discipline of right thinking will become a challenging game. Put God at the center of your thinking, and you have added infinity to power.

ACCEPT GOD'S SALVATION

The second law is: Accept what God offers you, His total salvation. He never intended that we be only partially redeemed. His love covers *all* our sins, heals *all* our wounds, even the deep wounds of the spirit inflicted on us by life. Wherever we feel fear, anger, or guilt in our emotions, at that point God's love is not operating. For God's love makes all things whole and pure and sound.

APPLY GOD'S LOVE

I developed a technique for applying God's love to the sore places in my heart. When I stilled my mind in prayer and meditation, usually some resistance or unpleasant memory or emotion would intrude upon my attention. I learned to face each one, claiming my responsibility for having done or said or thought that which now appeared to be unchristlike. I confessed it, claimed God's forgiveness, and turned it over to Him. Often in imagination I wrapped it in His love and gave it to Him, telling myself I could now no longer see it or claim it. And if I needed to repeat this process, I did so till that hurt was healed by His love.

Quietness in prayer is absolutely essential to this process. Unless we get still, God cannot reveal to us those buried emotions that cause us trouble. It may be in some cases that to pour down enough of God's love into the inner mind through meditation and contact with God will suffice to heal. But usually there must be an emptying out, and unburdening, a discharging of the energy locked up in those buried emotions.

Therefore a very helpful procedure and one that is often indispensable is to talk out all these bad memories with a trusted friend, one who loves you, will not condemn you, but will pray with you.

MAKING A NEW PATTERN

The subconscious mind takes instruction from conscious thinking. It cannot reason or argue. It obeys blindly and accurately. If there is a chronic illness, then the subconscious is carrying a fixed emotional pattern or habit that prevents healing. To change such a pattern or habit, the conscious mind must drive down enough good commands and do it often enough to break through that pattern and establish a new one. This is difficult but not impossible. It may take some months, or some years, but it is worth the effort.

AFFIRMATIONS

Here is where affirmations come in. Use affirmations

morning, noon, and night. Let all thinking be positive, uplifting, hopeful. But at special times quiet the mind and talk to the subconscious. To do it out loud is more effective, for then the impression is made through the thought, the act of speaking, and the sense of hearing.

The Scripture is full of affirmations: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." Or the words of God directly to us: "I am thy God who healeth thee;" "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Search the Scriptures to find the ones you need.

Then make specific affirmations to meet your specific needs. I was fearful, confused, ill at ease, easily upset. I told myself: "I have good courage;" "I am becoming more peaceful and calm." Also I used specific affirmations for my physical problems: "My back is getting straighter and stronger;" "My hip is becoming more flexible;" "I am walking better," etc. Make your own collection of affirmations in a notebook. You will find good ones in hymns, poems, prayers.

Use these over and over with purpose, with determination, with knowledge that you are obeying a law of the mind that operates just as surely as the law of gravity.

Talk to yourself inside all the time. "You can't get disturbed." "You are learning to be quiet and peaceful." "Don't hurry." "Take it easy." "Everything is all right." "God is here." "God holds your hand and walks with you." "God is thinking through you." Some have found the "you" approach better than the use of "I".

Persistence, perseverance, and determination will bring results.

OPEN YOUR HEART

Open your heart daily to the love of God. As you place your body in the sunshine for warmth and healing, so now expose all the inner consciousness to God's love. For it is God's love that heals. Drink it in. Absorb it into every pore. Fill your whole mind, emotions, and consciousness with it. Watch it transform weakness to strength, confusion to peace. And

know that this love is more powerful than all the combined forces of evil, and that it will transform all that it is allowed to touch vitally. Meditate on God's love as a great ocean in which you lose yourself, as a stream in which you are one drop, as quietness and warmth to which you willingly surrender your whole being.

Rufus Moseley said that he had seen many wonderful healings and transformations result from inviting God and His love to come into every part of the being: brain, eyes, ears, throat, lungs, heart, digestive system, and all the way down to the feet; also into the mind, emotions, and spirit. This can be made into a powerful meditation or affirmation.

VISUALIZE

Visualize what you want within yourself. Visualize the way you want to act or respond to external stimuli. Make a new picture for yourself as you want to be.

In the part where there is weakness, visualize strength, affirm strength. In the situation that used to cause you anger, anxiety, or self-justification, see yourself untroubled, calm, nonresisting. Every night upon retiring, visualize yourself the way you want to be tomorrow in all such situations. Eventually these pictures will represent you.

A WAY OF PRAYING

All this is a way of praying the prayer of acceptance. All of these techniques open the heart to receive more of God's love. And when you have persuaded your mind and emotions to yield up all claim to self and surrender completely to God, you will begin to feel the transformation and rejoice in it.

SPECIAL HELP

Sometimes there will still be some emotions so deeply buried you cannot bring them out to the light. You find yourself still bound by some physical trouble or attutude of mind you cannot seem to change. In such a case seek the help of psychiatrist or counselor.

RESENTMENT

One of the emotions listed above deserves a special word because it is a contributing factor in most illnesses. That is resentment, which means unforgiveness. Resentment arises within us because we are hurt. But to hold resentment in our hearts is devastating.

This matter of total forgiveness is so important that Jesus included it in the prayer which is our pattern prayer and then took pains to emphasize it: "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." You see, we have never really believed this or we would forgive. We would manage somehow not to let the sun go down upon our wrath. For buried resentment is one of our worst enemies. Get every such wound healed today, now, by the application of God's love until you can forgive and accept God's forgiveness for having been unforgiving.

All writers in the field of 'spiritual healing' (which includes physical as well as emotional healing) tell us that one of the first rules to be obeyed is to forgive everybody everything and to forgive life for the hurts we have suffered. Only the experiencing of the love of God in our hearts enables us to forgive completely. This is something much deeper than belief or will power. Love is a deep emotion that must take the place of resentment deep down in the feeling tone and the inner consciousness. As a man feels down in his heart—so is he.

PRAISE

Neither can we overlook the part gratitude plays in our healing. Next to love it is the strongest healing emotion. . . . . In my hours of distress and confusion I usually found quicker relief in the 103rd Psalm than anywhere else. "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name." By the time I had quoted the entire Psalm thoughtfully and *felt* its release and joy, I was at peace. Praise literally opens the doors of the heart to receive more of God. Praise gets us out of the prison of grief and complaining and self. Praise lifts the spirit from earth to heaven, from self to God. "Praise ye the Lord.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

What man experiences in his emotional life, so is he. Certainly we have not received or experienced our full salvation in Christ until all these unchristlike emotions are healed and transformed into the mind of Christ. Perhaps after all this is our major problem. For myself I feel sure I would have succumbed physically had I not centered my desire, my prayer, my thinking upon achieving this goal—the transforming of those buried and harmful emotions and attitudes.

"Take heed to yourselves." "Keep thyself pure." "Be ye holy for I am holy." "Whatsoever things are true, hon est, just, pure, lovely, of good report . . . think on these things." "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ." We are called to be "partakers of the divine nature."

These are commands and promises from God's word. Are we obedient? Or receptive? Are we submissive to His transforming presence and power in the deep inner recesses of the heart?

This alone is our victory.

OPPOSING FUTILITIES

Rose Noller

The sheep on the one hand; the wolves on the other;
These are the enemies of brother to brother;

These, why our going must stumble unshod;
These, why the stars fail unflowered in sod;

The sheep who are gentle but do as they are told;
The wolves of the pack, be it blood or rash gold; —

I weary of wolves and I weary of sheep,
Who plunder and blunder the bright, splendid deep!

TEN POEMS

By Betty Miller Daly

TRUTH

All there is is truth alone
Or shades away from it to black.
Truth alone is all there is
And fullness of or dismal lack.

LOVE

Love flies
    through obstacles
    with ease
As birds
    through shadows
    cast by trees

I THINK

Had years and continents been one
Christ, Buddha, and Mohammed
Would have been fast friends.
Perhaps
They knew no barriers of space or time
And were
Or are,
I think.

LIKE FANS

Featured on the front table of
The Intimate Book Store
    in Chapel Hill
    was The Book of the Hand.
It had everything;
Pictures showing one's rightful vocation...
                character...
                future....
It was all there.

In full color and full size was
The picture of an upturned palm;
The life line shaped like the
Top of a folding fan.
The fan had ten spokes,
        each space a decade.
I looked away too late...
Having already seen.

The question now is —
    not am I brave enough to know
    when those around me will be leaving;
The question is —
Do I want to know?

This knowledge is finely traced in my mind,
I cannot erase it,
But I shall close all upturned palms,
    I shall fold them quietly
            like fans
            without looking.

THAT ONE

Like a band saw his voice whined
and bothered me
until I saw something I really liked —
The way he took a rough situation
in hand
ran it through his mind
and
it came out clean cut
planed
smelling fresh
Then it was easy to forget
the debris which lay around
and the voice

ORANGE

Orange flows free from other colors,
mounds itself in rounds of harvest moons,
light as paper lanterns in night gardens,
casts omens of love at vesper time.

Orange flows free from other colors,
stems into full sweet orbs in tropic groves,
swells to ripeness in sundrenched orchards,
rounds itself in mounds of autumn pumpkins.

Orange flows free from other colors,
pours itself in pools at sunset,
vibrates at dawn in breasts of robins,
is cadence in the rise and downward float of fish in bowls.

Contemplating orange,
in some sweet mystic way expands and magnifies
like fanning coals to brightness
on beds of soft white ash.

SILVER

Silver is passing conversation,
soft laughter,
perception.

SIMPLY

Who calls the dove simply gray
has not seen her in morning light
showing color bright as peacocks.

Who calls the crow simply black
has missed her in the garden
preening feathers until sharp darts
flash red, green, and purple.

Who calls the whip-poor-will
drab and ugly
has not looked beneath her
piebald, whiskered face
into her beating breast,
heard her earnest love call,
watched her foil of broken wing.

Pray that I shall judge no thing
only gray, black, or drab.
If I judge at all may it be to say --
"These are holy — these are God's own."

I NEED DANDELIONS

I need dandelions.
The winter has been
    arduous
    like brown leaves
        beneath the oak,
    logs cut and stacked,
    toads buried in clay.

I need dandelions.
I need to see their faces,
        retrace their leaf design.
I need to chew their pungent stems,
        feel their cool thick heads.

I'm going now,
    I will be back when
    I have found the dandelions.

THE MEASURE OF MY LOVE I DO NOT KNOW

Let children measure love by hugs and pecks,
By hopscotch luck, and skill in jump-rope games,
By buttons stitched in rows from waists to necks,
And messages in spider webs and flames.
Let maidens count their love with soda straws
Pinched end to end, and keep full faith to break
Odd petals from a daisy; trust as laws
Their dreams made on a wedge of wedding cake.
But how shall I, a woman grown, matured,
Account for love? I know no words to say;
Words all are nebulous and unimmured.
When scrutinized, love breaks into a spray.
The measure of my love I do not know,
Yet stand in awe and know that it is so.

The difference between East and West results from a difference in focus. The East fixes its gaze not upon things but on that divine essence which is the cause of all things. . . .

INCARNATION OF SIVA: SHANKARACHARYA

Francis Merchant

Part I

The flute-like tones of the eternal have charmed the people of India and held them captive. They have walked to a different rhythm from that of the West. Their thoughts have been focussed on the timeless truths and the formless realities of the spiritual world. Not for them the measured ticking of Time's syllables or the endless agitation of physical activity which muddies the waters of life and ends in the melancholy frustration of death. Time sounds with less insistence in the East. The kingdoms built of brick and steel seem to them ephemeral shadows of a reality that resides in the heart of things.

This is not apathy or indifference, but the focussing of the mind upon a strange quest—an attempt to probe into a world of causes, not of effects. All that the senses reveal is an effect rather than an originating cause. The great orbs, suns, and galaxies that populate the vastness of interstellar space are but the materialized concretions of a mighty Will, a flamingly creative Purpose, the very contemplation of which staggers the imagination and dwarfs the proud works of man into pale insignificance.

The creation of this mighty Will is Nature. With this external garment of the Lord the West concerns itself. For the Hindu, the one who fashioned the garment is of prime importance. Within the circumscribed limits of time and space, the ceaseless whirl

of life continues. Solar systems, planets and human beings are born and die; in unending cycles creation and decay succeed each other. This is the realm of becoming, of change, of alternation. The Hindu seeks to comprehend being, not becoming.

The difference between East and West results from a difference in focus. The West accepts the space-time world and struggles for the power and glory of this domain, while the centuries have resounded with the din of the mighty conflict. The East fixes its gaze not on things but on that divine essence which is the cause of all things. The world about is but a stage on which the drama of life-in-form is being enacted—a drama which is no more real than a play.

Beyond every finite lies the Infinite; beyond every pulse-beat of onward-creeping time lies the boundless Eternal. The call of the Infinite exercises a strange fascination upon those who are attuned to its subtle note. They turn away from the finite and call it unreal; to the spirit alone they attribute true being. Imprisoned in time and space, they meditate a way of escape. Out of the Infinite, man proceeds; into the Infinite, he is absorbed. The interval between, men call life, but in truth it is limitation, imprisonment, death. The Infinite, the source from which all things have come and the ocean to which all rivers return, is the one reality. The wonders of the natural world are as nothing compared to the glory of that Source of Light from which it emanated.

The multitudinous earthly sounds crowd out the inexpressibly sweet note of the Infinite. In his effort to hear it, the Hindu withdraws into himself and listens so intently that the prison bars of time-space disappear, and he finds himself rooted in the Essence that fashioned the cosmos with all the flaming stars out of primordial chaos. From the obscuring shadow of the relative, he would escape to the blinding Light of the Absolute.

This quest must be understood, for otherwise the strenuous search for the highest good may be misconstrued as a desire to achieve placid extinction in consolatory nirvanas. The high goal is not attained by sinking into the indolence of apathetic inertia or wallowing in the troughs of differentiation. The mind must be sharpened by severe concentration and disciplined by surging as-

piration. The dualism of man versus nature must be overcome by the fusion of the self with the everlasting bliss.

Into such a land Shankara was born; the exact place is Kaladi. Time being a secondary consideration, the exact date of his birth is not known. Some authorities say it was the year 688; others, a few centuries earlier; still others, in the first century of our era. A haze surrounds his life. The miraculous and the commonplace fuse incongruously. Legend weaves its colored strands about his life. He was, it is said, an avatar, that is, a soul that returns to the earth after achieving perfection with the deliberate intent of aiding the human race. In fact, he is called an incarnation of the god Siva.

Incidents are related of the precocity of the child. Even in early life, the flame of intelligence shines brightly in his mind. The scriptures, or Vedas, fascinate him; he has mastered them before the age of ten.

The intense desire to renounce all things and to spend his life seeking the Absolute burns in his veins. In the West, where the urge to acquire is so strong, the compulsive will to renounce everything this world can offer is not readily understood. Neither does the goal—the quest of the Absolute—arouse an enthusiastic thrill. Had he determined to spend his life amassing a fortune or achieving power, occidentals could more easily understand his motivations.

The meaning of renunciation is spelled out in specifications. Ordinarily, a person is born into one of the four castes. There was only one acknowledged way of rising beyond the limitations and restrictions of earth, and that was to renounce the world and become a sannyasin, or holy man. The sannyasin dedicated his life to the search for the absolute truth. He lived and died in outer poverty. All worldly desires were extinguished. Marriage was not for him; nor were the enjoyments of life. The will to renounce was substituted for the urge to accumulate.

The vision which caused Shankara to turn his back upon the world may seem difficult to comprehend. Yet, just as compelling negative drives affect conduct, so, too, do positive inclinations.

The nurturing of certain positive tendencies creates a new man, for a changed focus produces a changed consciousness.

Shankara's desire to renounce the world and become a sannyasin was opposed by his mother. For some time she withheld permission. He obtained it by a ruse. One day, it is said, when he was with his mother at a nearby river, a crocodile caught hold of his foot. He shouted to his mother that he was in great danger and might be pulled into the stream at any moment. Would she not permit him to become a sannyasin and so acquire merit before the crocodile swallowed him? Dismayed by the danger, she consented. No sooner had she done so than Shankara extracted his foot from the jaw of the crocodile and thanked his mother for having granted his dearest wish.

Having said farewell to his mother, Shankara left home and proceeded to search for a teacher, or guru. Great respect is shown to the guru. He has achieved a measure of enlightenment and is willing to transmit to others that which he has attained by hard effort. He deservedly occupies a central place in the spiritual life of India. For centuries he was the guide, the inspirer, the encourager of the young. The devotion that grew up between guru and pupil ennobled both. Not knowledge alone did the teacher impart; he gave of himself. The riches he had accumulated by a lifetime of study he bestowed on his charge. For the student, the teacher was a model, a seeker who had traveled farther on the path of wisdom and could open up new worlds with a few well-chosen words.

How can we understand what the concept of guru meant to the young Shankara? Reverence, joy, and anticipation filled the boy's heart when he met his destined teacher, Gorinda. The relationship between the one who is eager to impart knowledge and him who thirstily craves it is one of the most beautiful to contemplate. Both, following the star of wisdom, are enriched. The guru rejoices in the progress of the pupil; the latter expands his heart as gratitude toward the giver of knowledge overflows. The benign effect that one individual can have upon another is one of the mysteries of life. In an inexplicable manner, the energies of a noble person evoke the finer qualities of those with whom he associates.

At the touch of the guru's hand, the seeds of many virtues grow in the consciousness of the pupil. The guru brightens life by adding new dimensions of meaning.

Shankara was an apt pupil. Eagerly he absorbed the teachings which his guru expounded. The young man sharpened his mind on metaphysics and displayed great subtlety in discussing spiritual matters. Gorinda was highly pleased with his charge. The time came, however, when the teacher felt that he had taught Shankara all he could. Gorinda urged the young sannyasin to go to the holy city of Benares and there associate with the sages.

At length Shankara reluctantly said goodbye to his beloved guru and set out for Benares. In the holy city his reputation for intellectual brilliance and profound spirituality was soon established. He engaged in many debates and proved to be more than a match for metaphysicians of great ability. His fame spread, and he became known as a competent advocate of a metaphysical doctrine called Advaitism, or non-dualism. Shankara was an uncompromising idealist who declared that our sense of separateness is an illusion. As life is one, though it manifest through innumerable forms, so is the individual. The form-aspect of life so dominates the consciousness of man that he is held captive by its limitations. His attention is focussed on the changing forms; hence he fails to arrive at an understanding of the undying essence within. This teaching of absolute unity he developed into a system which combined logic with high-minded spiritual impulse.

An incident occurred to him at this time which showed the necessity of weaving philosophical insights into the fabric of daily experience. As he one day went to his midday bath in the waters of the Ganges River, his followers went before him to clear the way. They met a chandala, that is, an untouchable. Such a person is a member of no caste and consequently regarded as a moral leper. He is looked upon as the lowest of the low and his very shadow is supposed to pollute others. For this reason he does not travel the main highway, but shrinks from contact with all who have the status of caste.

Such an untouchable stood in the path of Shankara as he

proceeded toward the Ganges. Being a member of the Brahman caste, Shankara had been taught that chandalas were degraded beings. The two finally stood face to face—the Brahman and the untouchable. They represented different poles of experience, completely exclusive strata of society.

The untouchable, instead of retreating, stood his ground.

"If you teach that all is one, how is it that you draw discriminating distinctions?" he asked. "If all forms are unreal, how do you justify your actions?"

Shankara immediately saw the logic of the other's position. The Brahman bowed to the untouchable. The latter was as much an expression of the Absolute Reality as the greatest saint. If all forms were illusory so were all distinctions based upon them.

The sannyasin bade his followers to allow the chandala to go in peace, for the untouchable's understanding of spiritual doctrine had raise him above all considerations of caste.

On other occasions, Shankara was moved to write poetry by the incidents that occurred to him. Once, when he was going to bathe in the Ganges during the morning hours, he heard a small boy reciting the rules of grammar in a shrill, grating, sing-song voice. The sound was not pleasing to the sage's ear. The boy's grammatical lament disturbed the bright and solemn silence of the morning. Shankara listened to the rising and falling inflections of the boy's voice for some time. In a world of pain, death and catastrophe, someone is always struggling with the rules of grammar rather than the syllables of divine being, memorizing worldly precepts instead of chanting the name of God. Revolving these thoughts in his mind, Shankara wrote a poem entitled "Hymn of Renunciation." The refrain is inspired by the schoolboy's repetitive cries:

Worship Govinda, foolish one!
Rules of grammar profit nothing
Once the hour of death draws nigh.

He might have substituted the rules of etiquette, of ceremonial, of egotistic success or of amassing wealth for those of grammar.

The rolling Ganges River, with its ever-fluctuating surface, flow-

ing majesty, and sparkling waters had a special fascination for the sage. He would contemplate it by the hour, seeking to touch the heart of the mystery. Just as it restlessly moves outward to merge with the mighty ocean, so do the tides of life sweep the individual forward toward union with the absolute being. The sheer beauty of the silver stream prompted him to describe it as "Mother Earth's most precious necklace." He is even inclined to regard the fish that abide in these waters as fortunate:

Rather a fish or a turtle in Thy waters,
A tiny lizard on Thy banks would I be,
Or even a shunned and hated outcast,
Living but a mile from Thy sacred stream,
Then the proudest emperor afar from Thee.

These words reveal an aspect of the sage's nature which is often overlooked—a love of beauty, a delight in nature. He did not scorn the beauty of this world although he loved the source from whence it had proceeded more.

The stern logic of Shankara's writings has obscured the flow of tender feelings that come from the heart. He had profound appreciation of the feminine principle. Although he spoke of the Absolute Reality as the goal, he worshiped the Mother of the Universe, the divine creative energy that had generated the vast cosmos. To that mighty being his living prayers were directed. For him the invisible Mother pervaded the universe, a secure refuge of infinite compassion.

No father have I, no mother, no comrade,
No son, no daughter, no wife, and no grandchild,
No servant or master, no wisdom, no calling:
In Thee is my only haven of refuge,
In Thee, my help and my strength, O Bhavani (Divine Mother).

The inwardly conceived image of a Mother of the Universe who strews stars and solar systems in space, yet is lovingly responsive to the least of her children, sweetens the severity of Shankara's philosophy. The universe is not an alien place; beyond the grinding mills of stern necessity and law abides the compassionate Mother. "I have abandoned one by one the shining gods,"

Shankara writes, but his devotion to the Divine Mother remains constant.

The masculine and feminine elements in the teaching of Shankara are infrequently discussed. His worship of the Divine Mother, "whose radiance burns a million times more brightly than sun and moon and fire," is balanced by his emphasis upon Siva, the Destroyer. Among the Hindus, the unmanifested Absolute is said to find expression through a trinity of energies identified with Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Brahma represents the creative power; Vishnu, the preserving; Siva, the destroying. The world cannot subsist without the operation of these mighty powers. The formation of a cosmos requires the initiative of a creative principle; sustaining it, a cohesive and ordering energy; and a power that destroys the forms which have outlived their purpose.

The divine power, in its aspect as Siva, is a transforming and regenerating agent. It prescribes the death of the old in order that the new may be born, the destruction of outworn forms so that a greater glory may find expression. Siva is represented as holding a white skull in his hand. He is feared, for he brings death and transformation. He sweeps away the debris of the old to make way for the new. Yet he is beneficent; in destroying the form, he preserves the essence. He slays the body, and saves the soul. Those who do not cling to forms find his gifts sweet and reverence him. Shankara, who had renounced the world, honored him. "Of what avail is the body or a home?" the sage asked. "Know these to be transitory and quickly shun them; worship Siva, as your guru instructs you, for the attaining of self-knowledge."

In a still profounder sense, Siva represents the dynamic power that underlies the creation. "I salute the Cause of the universe," Shankara writes in a hymn to Siva. With intense insistence, the sage calls upon this being of beings:

Lord of the universe! Refuge of the whole world!
O Thou of infinite forms!
Soul of the universe! O Thou in whom repose the infinite virtues of the world!
O Thou adored by all! Compassionate One!

O Friend of the poor!
Rescue me, helpless as I am, from the trackless forest of this miserable world!

Thus does the sage, standing in multiplicity, persistently invoke the undifferentiated one; the drop of water strives to unite itself with the mighty ocean.

The strenuous attempt to expand the prison bars of consciousness and to identify the individual self with the reality which forms most imperfectly reflect, brings bliss which the world can never bestow. A state of awareness is achieved which can only be drscribed in paradoxes and superlative allusions:

The All-pervading am I;
Everywhere I exist, and yet I am beyond the senses;
Neither salvation am I, nor anything to be known:
I am Eternal Bliss and Awareness — I am Siva!

I am Siva!

(Part II will be published in the August issue)

ABUNDANCE

Elizabeth Searle Lamb

I pray
In a habit of faith;
I accept
All that is mine;
I use
All that I have;
I give thanks
To God unceasingly;
I live
Abundantly.

NOTICES AND COMMENT

MISS BROWN RECUPERATING. At the end of March, Kathryn G. Brown, Executive Secretary of the Fellowship, entered a New York hospital for routine minor surgery. Complications arose, and major heart-surgery was found to be necessary once again. This was accomplished successfully. As this issue goes to the printer, early in May, Miss Brown is recuperating at her family's home in Spring Valley, N.Y. Her convalescence has been lightened and cheered by the prayers and thoughts of many friends, to whom she is very grateful.

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THE QUIET

Virginia Lytle Waller

My hands reach out
To draw it close,
I am touched
And blest with it.

My ears hear
Quietness,
I am caressed
And soothed by it.

My heart rests
In quietness,
I am at peace
Where quiet is.